FELLOWS AWARD FOR RESEARCH EXCELLENCE (FARE)

The Fellows Award for Research Excellence (FARE) is an abstract competition that recognizes outstanding intramural scientific research by Postdoctoral and Clinical Fellows, as well as students in the Graduate Partnerships Program. FARE provides travel support to attend and present data at a scientific meeting. All abstracts are evaluated anonymously on scientific merit, originality, experimental design, and overall quality/presentation. The FARE competition is sponsored by NIH Fellows Committee, NIH Scientific Directors and NIH Office of Intramural Training & Education.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

WHEN

Generally FARE competition opens late February (during two weeks) and winners are announced by the middle of August.

WHERE

Applications are submitted electronically at https://www.training.nih.gov/felcom/fare.

WHO

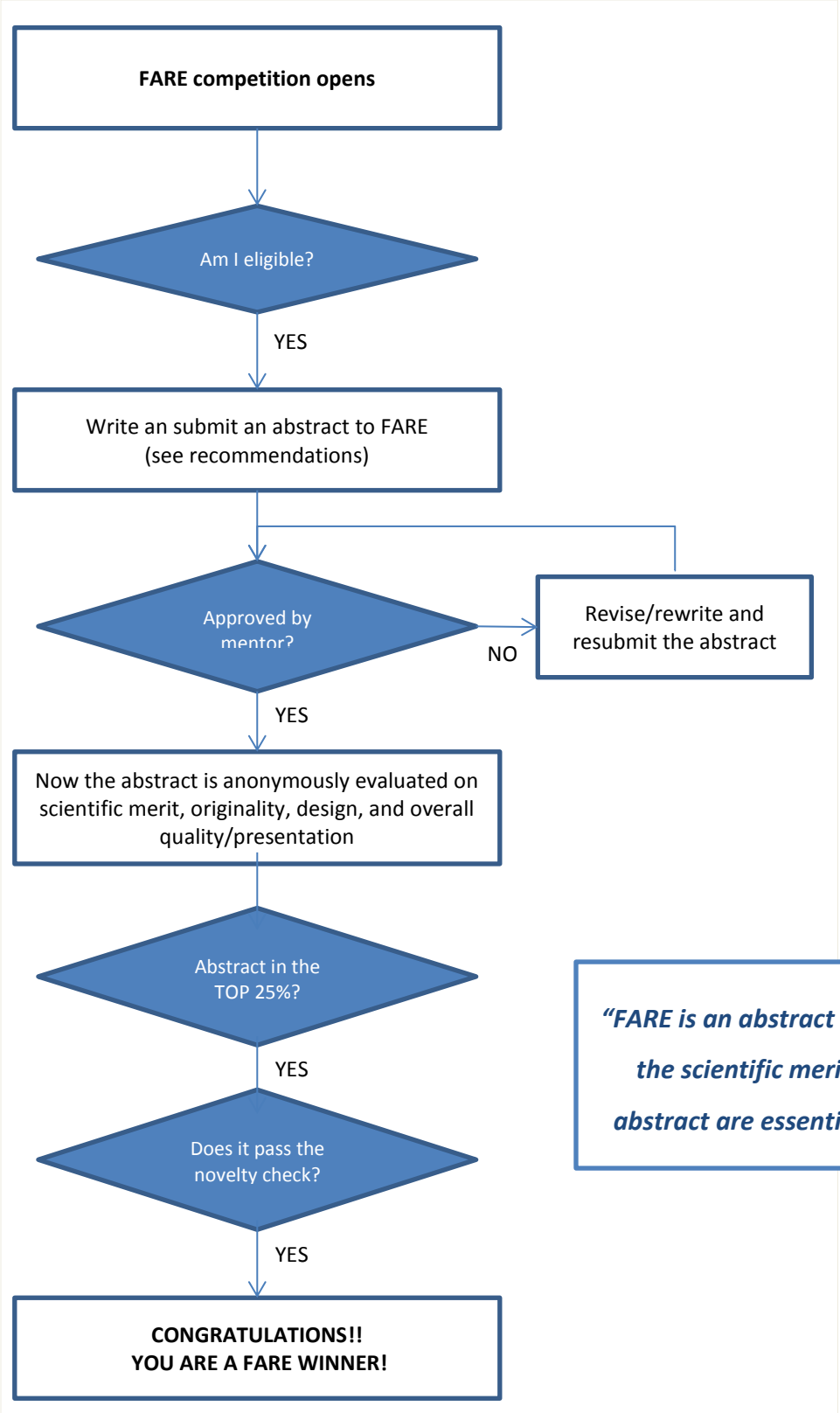
Postdocs, postbacs, visiting fellows, research fellow, etc. with less than 5 years at the NIH may submit an abstract to the FARE competition. All qualified applicants are encouraged to apply.

WHY

There are a great number of reasons to submit an abstract to the FARE awards. These are just few of them: to win $1000 for traveling, to improve your CV, to be a FARE judge next year and last but (definitely) not least it is always useful to write an abstract about your research.

QUESTIONS

For information on FARE 2015, visit https://www.training.nih.gov/felcom/fare or send an e-mail to FARE@mail.nih.gov.



"FARE is an abstract competition and both the scientific merit and clarity of the abstract are essential to win an award."

1 **Scheme of the FARE procedure**

TIPS FOR THE PROCESS

Study sections

The applicant must assign the abstract to three study sections in order of preference (see below FARE study sections). The FARE committee attempts to assign each abstract to the first-choice study section; however, the earlier you submit the abstract, the more likely your abstract will be placed at your first-choice study section. Generally, the first choice for NCBIers should the section "Informatics/Computational Biology".

Biochemistry – General and Lipids	Informatics/Computational Biology
Biochemistry – Proteins	Information Science and the History of Medicine
Biophysics	Intracellular Trafficking
Carcinogenesis	Metabolomics/Proteomics
Cell Biology – General	Microbiology and Antimicrobials
Cell Biology–Cytoskeleton, Extracellular Matrix, and Structural Biology	Molecular Biology – Eukaryotic
Cell Cycle–General, Regulators and Checkpoints, Apoptotic Mechanisms	Molecular Biology – Prokaryotic
Chemistry	Neuroimmunology
Chromatin and Chromosomes	Neuropharmacology and Neurochemistry
Clinical and Translational Research	Neuroscience – Cellular and Molecular
Cultural, Social and Behavioral Sciences	Neuroscience – General
Developmental Biology	Neuroscience – Integrative, Functional, and Cognitive
DNA–binding Proteins/Receptors and DNA Repair	Neuroscience – Neurodegeration and Neurological disorders
Endocrinology	Neurotransmission and Ion Channels
Epidemiology/Biostatistics – Etiology, Risk, and Prevention	Pharmacology and Toxicology/Environmental Health
Epidemiology/Biostatistics – Prognosis and Response Predictions	Physiology
Epigenetics	Protein Structure/Structural Biology
Gene Expression	Psychiatry
Gene Therapy	Radiology/Imaging/PET and Neuroimaging
Genetics	Signal Transduction – G–proteins and Ion Channels
Genomics	Signal Transduction – General
Hematology/Oncology, Tumor Immunology, and Therapy	Stem Cells – General
HIV and AIDS Research	Stem Cells and Cancer
Immunology – Autoimmune	Stress, Aging, and Oxidative Stress/Free Radical Research
Immunology – General	Tumor Biology and Metastasis
Immunology – Infectious Disease	Vascular Disease and Biology
Immunology – Innate and Cell–mediated Host Defenses	Virology – DNA
Immunology – Lymphocyte Development and Activation	Virology – RNA and Retroviruses

2 **FARE study sections (https://www.training.nih.gov/felcom/fare/studysections)**

Novelty check

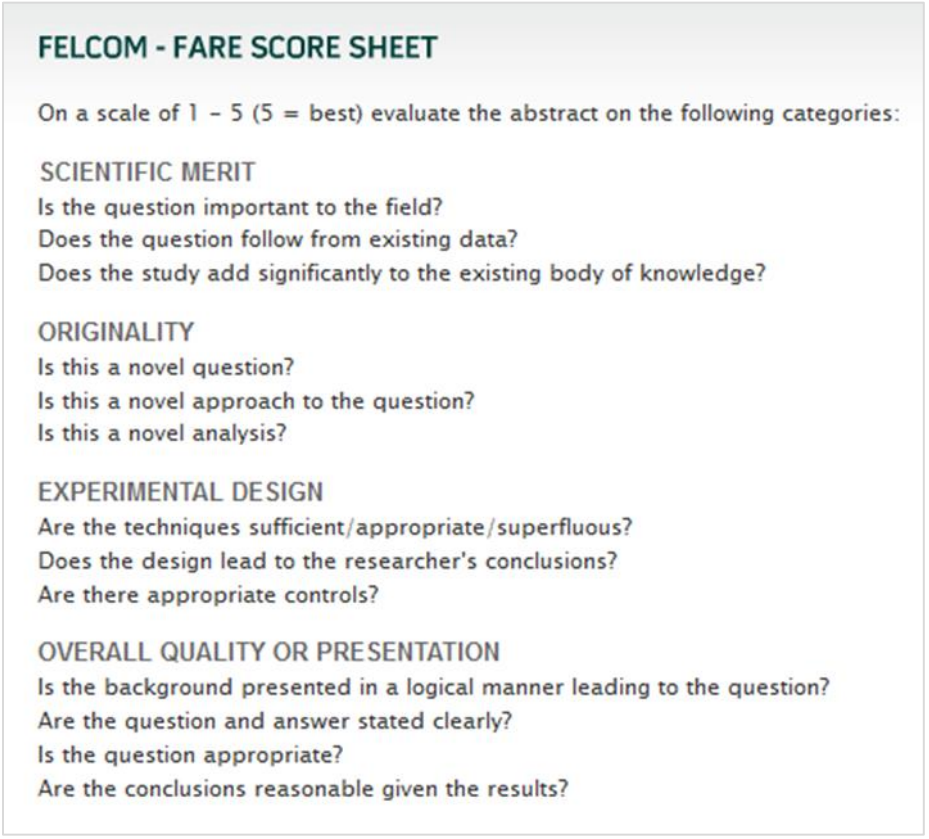
The FARE committee screens for novelty the top 25% of the abstracts in each category. Use these questions to assess if your abstract would pass the novelty test:

- Are there any features that should disqualify the abstract? This includes references, names, citations, links to lab webpages or anything else that would identify the author. An abstract passes if it contains no identifying information.

- Does the abstract represent unpublished (before *2014*) data? This is checked by entering the applicant's name and a few keywords from the title or abstract into Pubmed. An abstract passes if its wording and content has not been published prior to January 1, *2014*.
- Is the abstract at least 50% novel compared to a previous winning abstract? This only applies to previous winners. An abstract passes if it is more than 50% novel in wording and content compared to last year's.

FARE ABSTRACT

Usually FARE abstracts are longer than regular ones found in research articles or scientific meetings. Ideally, the abstract should be divided in 4 sections (introduction/background, question/objectives, methods/approach, results and conclusion). A successful abstract responds to a series of questions related to scientific merit, originality and experimental design (see below the score sheet used for the FARE judges) and is presented in a clear manner.



FELCOM - FARE SCORE SHEET

On a scale of 1 – 5 (5 = best) evaluate the abstract on the following categories:

SCIENTIFIC MERIT
Is the question important to the field?
Does the question follow from existing data?
Does the study add significantly to the existing body of knowledge?

ORIGINALITY
Is this a novel question?
Is this a novel approach to the question?
Is this a novel analysis?

EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN
Are the techniques sufficient/appropriate/superfluous?
Does the design lead to the researcher's conclusions?
Are there appropriate controls?

OVERALL QUALITY OR PRESENTATION
Is the background presented in a logical manner leading to the question?
Are the question and answer stated clearly?
Is the question appropriate?
Are the conclusions reasonable given the results?

3 - FARE score sheet (*https://www.training.nih.gov/felcom/fare/scoresheet*)

Introduction/background

The introduction is probably the key point to win a FARE award. Your abstract will be evaluated by 5 judges (fellows and young investigators) that may not be experts in your scientific field and most likely do not know how important your research topic is. FARE Judges must understand the abstract in order to evaluate its merit. Therefore, the background must be clear and presented in a logic manner leading to the question. In other words, the introduction in a FARE abstract should be used to prepare any reader (with minimal knowledge of your topic) to understand how the study adds up to the current knowledge.

Question/objective

This section is generally short (ideally 2 sentences), direct to the point and must address some of the questions from the score sheet: Is this a novel question/objective? Does the question/objective follow from existing data?

Methods/approach

Again, write this section keeping in mind that judges may not be experts in your field and try to answer experimental design questions: Are the techniques and controls appropriate? Is this the best possible approach? Why is it novel? What are the improvements from previous methods? Does the design lead to conclusions?

Results and conclusion

These two sections must be written as clear as the previous ones and must respond to the following questions: How does the study add significantly to the existing body of knowledge? Are the conclusions reasonable given the results?